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**THE DUTIES**  
**OF**  
**SUBJECTS TO THEIR RULERS,**

WITH A  
SPECIAL VIEW TO THE PRESENT TIMES;

**SERMON**

PREACHED IN  
**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCARBOROUGH,**  
ON A DAY OF THANKSGIVING,

AND NOW PUBLISHED  
*BY REQUEST OF THE CONGREGATION.*

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BY  
THE REV. JAMES GEORGE,  
MINISTER OF SCARBOROUGH.

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"Pro Rege, Leges et Grege"

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Toronto :  
PRINTED BY W. J. COATES.

1838.

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REVEREND SIR,

We, the Members of the Presbyterian Church of Scarborough, respectfully request, that you will grant us, for publication, a copy of your Sermon on "the Duty of Subjects to their Rulers," preached on our Day of Thanksgiving. We believe that the sentiments contained in that Discourse may have a beneficial effect on the minds of others.

We remain,

REVEREND SIR,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed in the name of the Congregation by)

WILLIAM PATERSON,  
*Chairman.*

JAMES WHITESIDE,  
*Secretary Pro. Tem.*

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*Answer.*

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

I have now made up my mind, and beg to say, that I shall, with as little delay as possible, comply with your request. I have good reason, dear Brethren, for thinking that there exists betwixt us the most perfect unanimity of sentiment on those matters that concern all men who would be saved. This unanimity, I take it, is of the greatest importance to the happiness and usefulness of a Minister of religion. For if he and his people be not "of the same mind" on the great doctrines of Christianity, he will have little comfort among them, and they will derive but little advantage from his labours. But when unanimity on the highest subjects exists, it will not tend to lessen, but rather increase the stock of common good, if the Minister knows that his people hold similar views with himself, on matters of *minor importance*, but still matters of *much consequence* to the present happiness of men. Your request that I should publish the Sermon, delivered on the Day of Thanksgiving,\* is to me a gratifying proof that I labour among a people who can fully sympathize with the sentiments which it contains. I do not intend to say in this, what I think of your well tried constitutional principles; I may be permitted, however, to observe, that no portion of the community gave a more decisive proof of loyalty when the revolt took place last winter, than was given by the people of Scarborough. And may I not add, without any intention to pay a compliment, that your wish to have your duties as subjects plainly laid down before you is good evidenc that your loyalty is the product of sound principle, and is likely to be as honourable to yourselves as it must prove useful to your rulers.

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\* It may be proper to mention, that the day appointed for a Public Thanksgiving, by the late Lieutenant-Governor, could not be possibly kept as such by the Congregation of Scarborough. The reason was simply this—the appointment was not known until it was too late to give intimation to the Congregation. The Thanksgiving was consequently put off; but was at length sincerely attended to.

You are aware that the Discourse, although preached on a public occasion, yet is merely one of a series of Sermons which has been given on the relative duties. Late occurrences have led me to make a few remarks which otherwise would not have been necessary. Yet I need hardly tell you, that had the Discourse been preached a year ago, the sentiments it contains would have been substantially the same, and would have been uttered in precisely the same tone. The late rebellion has not communicated to me a single new idea, nor did it—it was impossible it could—in the slightest degree increase the horror and loathing with which I have always regarded those principles by which the minds of many have been so sadly perverted. The connection betwixt cause and effect is not more certain in any one operation in the physical world, than is the connection betwixt this political licentiousness and revolution. It were well that both rulers and people thought of this in time; for whether men think or no, things take their natural course.

Persons at a distance, into whose hands the Discourse may come, will be apt to suppose that I often carry politics to the pulpit. You know, Brethren, that this would be a most unjust supposition. I have now laboured among you for five years, and until the late outbreak you never heard one word from my lips in the pulpit on politics. I am not a political minister. The charge is false. You know it is. I have not shunned, on proper occasions, it is true, to express my opinion—being often asked my views—on politics, and to warn you against evils to which I saw you exposed. As your friend—as your minister, I felt at liberty, yea bound, to do this. But I have never made the house of God the *place*, nor the Sabbath-day the *time*, for such matters. Indeed I am fully convinced that the minister who labours to make men wise unto salvation, as it is in Christ Jesus, takes the most direct, nay the only, course to fit them for faithfully discharging all the duties of life. That you may be enabled faithfully to discharge all your duties here, and be received, through the grace of God, to glory hereafter, is the earnest wish and prayer of,

Your affectionate Friend and Pastor,

JAMES GEORGE.

## A SERMON.

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ROM. XIII. 1.—“*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*”

IN these words the Apostle requires subjects to be obedient to their rulers. The grounds on which this obedience is enjoined, and the various ways by which it is to be exemplified, as well as the benefits that result from good government are concisely, yet very distinctly, stated in the context. It is also worthy of notice, that the obedience required, is not to be rendered merely to those who fill thrones, but to all who are in authority—to all who are entrusted with the cares and discharge of any of the functions of Government. Hence says another apostle, “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the King, as supreme; or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him.” 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. Obedience to the sovereign *power* implies, of course, obedience to all subordinate officers; still, there is much wisdom in making the claim of obedience explicitly commensurate with the various *powers* of Government. For no error in theory could be greater, and few more mischievous in practice, than the supposition that allegiance might be rendered to the Sovereign with perfect fidelity; while Governors and Judges acting under, and by appointment of the *supreme power*, might be violently resisted, or treated with contempt. Let successful resistance be made to those who hold delegated authority—made to men of ability and integrity, even in the lower departments, and the profession of submission to the Sovereign will be found to be a mere phantom of the imagination, or more frequently a screen artfully employed to conceal the movements of sedition, until sedition is ready to break forth into rebellion. These remarks, I trust, not only illustrate an important idea in the text, but also tend, if I mistake not, to unfold a principle to which, in all fairness, may be traced much of that seditious spirit, whether open or disguised, that lately threatened the destruction of this Province. If the authority of the Government is not felt and respected, in *all its servants*, its efficiency for good hath come to an end.

As it is my intention in this Discourse, rather to give a plain exhibition of *certain* important duties which subjects owe to their rulers, than to discuss abstract principles, I do not feel called upon to inquire minutely into those questions that

refer to the origin of the magistrate's power ; the grounds on which obedience is rendered ; the extent to which it ought to be cheerfully yielded ; the point at which, under certain circumstances, it may cease ; and resistance, on the high principles of justice and mercy, become a sacred duty. You will easily perceive, that were these propositions to be thoroughly discussed, the discussion would yield matter rather for a volume than for a portion of a sermon. When such topics are fully investigated on purely philosophical principles, by a man of ripe faculties, the inquiry must afford to the intellectual labourer rich enjoyment, and be productive of substantial advantages to others. Yet, in truth, all men of good sense, and of virtuous dispositions, feel no difficulty, under ordinary circumstances, of coming to just and satisfactory conclusions on these and similar inquiries. At the same time it is well known, that these very questions have furnished inexhaustible themes for the Demagogue and the political Empiric. Out of these they have often brought *darkness*—not light, *confusion*—not order. For what is more easy than for an ingenious sophist, or even a determined wrangler, to lay hold upon some recondite principle in politics, or religion, and out of that start difficulties and objections, which, in the eyes of the ignorant, may have an air of learning and originality, yet do not possess in fact one particle of solid wisdom, and serve no other purpose save to weaken the understanding and corrupt the conscience of men. It were really amusing, if it were not so exceedingly mischievous, to hear men of the most moderate powers of mind prate about laying the foundations of Government, as if this were yet to be done ; and they, forsooth, the only persons capable of doing it. It would be prudent in certain men to avoid, as much as possible, all discussions on Government that turn on abstract principles.

On the questions to which reference has been made, I shall only make a few simple remarks. And (1) I observe, that how much soever the *form* of Government may be liable to alterations, from the changes incident to all communities of men ; and much as human wisdom in all cases must have to do in making suitable modifications ; still it is abundantly plain, both from scripture and the light of nature, that civil government is of divine appointment. God is the author of this, as well as of every other good thing which his creatures enjoy. Justice, Truth, Wisdom, Power and Benevolence, the essential elements of all good government, have been, and ever will be, the same. But these elements wherever found to exist are from the Author of nature ; and, if I may so speak, are parts or reflections of the grand principles of His own moral government. The powers that be,—or the principles that remain,—



are ordained of God. Now, whether we think of these principles, or of the constitution of nature—the latter rendering government so necessary, and the former making what is so necessary so unspeakably beneficial to the human race—we cannot but conclude, that civil government is an ordinance of Heaven. In what part of the universe soever innocency needs protection, or the virtues admit of cultivation, there this ordinance will have place. But (2) all this being admitted, it must follow that obedience, in the broad and natural sense of the thing, should be freely rendered to the Government under which we live. The word of God, and right reason alike demand this. And (3) rebellion never can be justifiable, or right in the sight of God, until the government has nullified its own claims to obedience, by having in some way or other wilfully destroyed the essential principles—and in all cases there are such, whether expressed or implied, in the relation or compact that exists between rulers and subjects.

With the last, by far the most trying of these general topics, you, my brethren, are I believe as little liable to be perplexed as you are disinclined at present to hear it discussed. Indeed, its frequent discussion proves clearly, that either the Government is extremely bad, or the public mind is in a most unhealthy state. It is folly, nay wickedness, for men to rack their imaginations in fancying cases in which resistance to Government may become their duty. Every man who knows when he should obey, and does obey authority from right motives, will know when, and how to resist oppression. It will be time enough for us, my hearers, to give our mind to this inquiry, when the Government under which we live has ceased to be a Government of law and of justice. To this pass things have not come. To say they have, is to utter the language of falsehood, or sheer folly; and out of hollow professions to make a cloak to hide the odiousness of the late rebellion. Most mad and wicked attempt! And let us, my brethren, this day, with hearts full of *sanctified* gratitude, adore Almighty God for the late deliverance. He hath saved us from ruin. He hath broken the arm of the wicked. He hath brought to light the *hidden things of darkness*. He hath restored peace, and preserved order among us. The Lord reigneth, to his name be the praise.

But ere I proceed further, I beg to guard you against supposing that I wish to inculcate a blind passive obedience to any Government armed with power to enforce its villanies.—This were not to support, but to subvert the fundamental principles of our admirable Constitution. Of its genius they are grossly ignorant who think that it makes provision for arbitrary power; and they are its enemies who would seek thus to

uphold it. Arbitrary power cannot be established without tearing up the British Constitution from its very foundation. I revere that Constitution, because I do, from my soul, regard it as the *nurse* and *protector* of genuine liberty. I urge obedience to the Government under which we live, because I believe it to be substantially a Government of law and of justice. I stand up zealously in its defence, because it is my solemn conviction, that whatever has been wrong in its administration, may be corrected by constitutional means, while I would regard its overthrow as the sorest calamity of a temporal sort that could befall this Province. And say, does not the word of God demand obedience to such a Government? Does not a just sense of your own best interests—a regard for the welfare of millions that may yet inhabit this vast and fertile country make it imperative on you as men, as christians and fathers, to stand up for a Constitution and Government under which you have enjoyed such perfect security, and have had, and do still possess, such a large share of temporal blessings? But I remark

I. *That it is the duty of all good subjects to pray for their rulers.*

"I exhort, therefore," says the apostle, "that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority," 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. This injunction, so explicitly laid down by the inspired writers, was faithfully attended to by the primitive christians. These pious men prayed fervently for all rulers. On the importance of remembering our rulers at a throne of grace, little needs to be said to those who believe in the efficacy of prayer. They will readily admit, that believing prayer is one of the divinely instituted means by which blessings are obtained for others, as well as for ourselves. No one more earnestly desired the prayers of his fellow christians than did the apostle. "Brethren, pray for us," was the affectionate request made by him to those on whose piety and sympathy he could rely. Nor will it be doubted, that he whose mind was illuminated by the Spirit of God, must have had clear and just conceptions of the connection between the performance of believing prayer, and the bestowment of blessings. But, he who desired the prayers of others when labours and trials pressed heavily upon him, earnestly exhorts all christians to pray for their rulers. The apostle's exhortation is to us a divine command. The reasons for this command will become strikingly apparent, if you reflect—

(1) That the duties of rulers are *extremely weighty*, and their station *highly responsible*.

There are rulers, it is true, who do not feel the burden of office, nor to any good purpose realize the responsible nature of their trust; men without principle, or habits of application to business, to whom office is a place for repose, not a field for labour. Such men, it must be confessed, will suffer little from the toils, and less from the anxieties, peculiar to their high station. But, alas, their ease is without innocency, and their repose without honour! Yea, such persons, how great soever their talents may be, are the scandals of Government, and the curses of their country. No statesman can be negligent without being highly criminal. His sins of omission are often sins of the deepest dye. This admitted, and you will not fail to pray, that your rulers may be kept from falling into a criminal, and dishonourable forgetfulness of their responsibilities and duties.

It were, however, in my opinion, far from true to suppose, that, as the Constitution is *now* constructed, and the various departments of Government balanced, and check-bound by one another; indifference to their duties is, or can be, common in British rulers. To them office, especially in the higher departments, is not a bed of roses; and its duty something widely different from an elegant recreation. Indeed, the ruler who feels his responsibilities as he ought, and labours faithfully for the good of his country, will have all his powers tasked to the severest toils, and his mind fretted with cares and anxieties of which the greatest part of men can form no conception. Such, in fact, is the constant and severe friction that this sort of labour produces on the intellect of faithful statesmen, that minds of the most solid structure have often given way under it.

And if it be—as it certainly is—far more honourable to rule nations now, than when men were uncivilized, and in a state of slavery; so is it far more difficult, and demands an incomparably greater degree of labour. The toil of the ruler now is mental toil; and is every day becoming more severe. The matters which in the present age require his attention—and in no country more than in Britain and her dependencies—are so various and complex, and the changes so great and sudden, not to speak of the conflicting interests and the fierce and perplexing movements of the different political parties: that plain it is, that the statesman who would watch, anticipate, and arrange as he ought, must possess various powers of a high order, and these powers must be constantly on the stretch—Nor ought it to be forgotten, that the highly artificial form which society has assumed in modern times—the rapid changes to which vast masses of property are liable—the human mind rather stimulated than nourished by political knowledge—the

contempt manifested by so many for all that has hitherto stood by prescription—the strong desire felt by various classes to break away from the positions which they have long occupied, and suddenly advance to new ground—the numberless channels which have of late been opened up for the gratifications of the passions of avarice and ambition:—all contribute to render the situation of rulers eminently difficult and laborious. The question is not, do these striking characteristics in modern society augur good or ill for human happiness? but do they not greatly increase the ruler's duties, and make these at once more delicate and more toilsome? Of this I think there cannot be a doubt. In order to fill their places well, rulers would require the patience of saints, and the wisdom of philosophers. To please all is impossible. To do justice to all is often difficult. And a single false step, O how fatal! Generations may feel and deplore the evil, yet may find it impossible to *correct in an age* a measure that was passed *in a day*. On the other hand, how many precious blessings have, under God, been secured to a people by the wisdom, integrity, and firmness of a Prince, or a single statesman. A slight acquaintance with history will sufficiently illustrate both these positions.

My Christian Brethren, think not that I make these remarks merely to display the duties and difficulties of those in authority. No. They are made simply from a wish to impress your minds with correct notions of the necessity of praying earnestly for men, whose duties are so arduous, and their station so responsible.

(2) *The temptations to which rulers are exposed* is another powerful reason why subjects should pray for them.

An elevated station—great and, to some extent, imperfectly defined trusts—a keen sense of shame—ardent ambition, and vast means for its gratification—will naturally expose even solid virtue to serious danger. From these, and similar causes, rulers are liable to peculiar temptations—and to each temptation under peculiar disadvantages. Those who move in the humbler walks of life, exposed to temptation, yet retaining their integrity, and keeping a good conscience, are possibly not always aware, to what extent they are indebted for all this, to the narrowness of their sphere, and their very limited means. Let no one sneer at this, as a sly bow to greatness, or a heartless compliment to poverty. I am sure a little reflection will convince you, that those who occupy the higher places, and hold the greater trusts in Government, have their virtue often severely tried. They are, indeed, tempted on all hands, and through all possible channels. They are tempted now to substitute expediency for the principles of rec-

titude. At another time they are tempted to sacrifice the claims of justice, or of mercy. They are tempted to-day to give up the interests of the many for the sake of the few—to-morrow, to sacrifice the interests of the few to the caprice of the many. They are threatened by parties—flattered by individuals—and frequently deceived by all. To act a prominent part in such a scene, and *never err*, is more than can be expected of the best of men; while even to act with discretion, and with an ordinary share of integrity, must require a large portion of wisdom, firmness, and pure moral worth. Pray that your rulers may possess these qualities in a high degree. For, bear it in mind, brethren, that the fall of rulers into certain temptations may cover a nation with disgrace, and may be the cause of wretchedness to millions. Such persons fall not alone; “when the rulers sin the people suffer.”

And says the Apostle, pray for them, *that ye may lead quite and peaceable lives*. The reflections already thrown out naturally suggest a few remarks on this important truth. It is easy to conceive of a system of government so admirably constructed, that even great folly, or wickedness in the rulers shall not produce an instant derangement in the public affairs, or create any sudden or visible mischief. Things may go on for a time in their usual course; just as you may have seen a piece of machinery when perfectly constructed, and fairly put in motion, perform its operations for an hour, although intrusted to the care of persons who neither understood its principles, nor regarded its safety. This, however, is a hazardous state of things. To drop the figure—of this be assured, that, that land will soon mourn bitterly, the rulers of which are children in wisdom, but veterans in crime. If they are either men of weak intellect, or of depraved hearts, their conduct must—it cannot be otherwise—produce among the people confusion, crime, and misery. No form of government can prevent wicked men in power from doing mischief. Even in our own Government, spite of its admirable system of checks, it is easy so see how wicked men may originate, and, if sufficiently powerful, may carry through measures, the ruinous effects of which may soon be felt in the remotest parts of the body politic. If you would enjoy the blessings of good government, and wish to lead quite and peaceable lives, pray to God that your rulers may be men who possess much wisdom,—“men who fear God, and hate covetousness.”

And, may I be allowed to remark for once,—from this place it shall but be for once,—that when you are called upon at any time to choose persons to represent you in Parliament, do so with candour and wisdom. Banish all party animosities and all low selfish considerations. Let your suffrage be giv-

en—honestly and fearlessly given for men of talents—men sound in their political views—of genuine moral worth—lovers of liberty, but haters of licentiousness ;—for men who will neither fear to oppose what is bad, nor shrink from the defence of what is good—who will neither cringe to the great, nor pander to the passions of the multitude.

But, in fine, while you strive to act wisely in this matter, never lose sight of the important duty which I have been urging on your attention. The man who never prays for himself is mad—is utterly forgetful of God. He that prays for himself, and will not pray for others—for rulers—neither understands the principles of our holy religion, nor have his feelings been purified or warmed by its graces. Happy is that Prince who rules over a praying people. Nor is it possible for a Sovereign to contemplate a more sublime and cheering spectacle, than that of a nation of families, as they approach their heavenly Father, to supplicate blessings for themselves, at the same time implore the Divine Benefactor to protect by his omnipotent hand, and with all his good graces to bless their Sovereign. Around such hearths as these, a good Prince has no reason to fear that sedition shall ever be hatched ; while the hands thus lifted up to supplicate blessings on the throne, will be the first to be lifted up to defend a righteous throne when assailed by violence. Would to God that rulers but understood how much their honour, safety, and happiness depend on the virtue and piety of the people. But I remark

II. *That it is the duty of subjects to pay taxes, that the Government under which they live, and by which they are protected, may be supported.*

This duty is also enjoined by Divine authority. “Render tribute to whom tribute is due, and custom to whom custom is due,” Rom. xiii. 7. In the context the reason for this, is in substance, stated to be,—that Government may be supported, and subjects preserved in their rights, by an efficient magistracy. As to the obligatory nature of this duty, the Saviour’s example will be held to be decisive by all who bow to His authority. Indeed, this, when viewed in the abstract, hardly admits of two opinions. All men are agreed on the principle. Yet, on this very matter, more than any other, have differences arisen which, in the end, have shaken Constitutions to pieces, and more than once changed the whole face of society in a country. It is not my intention to go fully into the subject. At the same time, its importance very plainly warrants, or rather demands, a few passing remarks.

Taxes are, in a sense, the sinews of Government. For, except in the rudest conditions of savage life, Government can-

not be supported, save at considerable expense ; while, from the peculiar circumstances in which a people may be placed, the means required for its support may, for a time at least, be very great. On the relative merits of different Governments, from their comparative expense, it were improper in this place to enter. The subject is one, indeed, which admits of declamation to any extent ; but on which wise men will find it difficult, if not impossible, to come to any definite or practical conclusions. Suffice it to say, that the least expensive in appearance is often the most so in reality ; while the cheapest is often, in every sense, the worst, because to the people the least efficient. The parsimony that enfeebles a Government is not a whit less mischievous than the profusion that corrupts it ; while, on the simple principle of calculation, the saving is often a loss. Nothing were easier than to fix on cases in which the ill-timed economy of a certain class of politicians has frustrated the most beneficial and best concerted measures, and in the end led to the most ruinous waste of national resources. It is, however, a maxim as sound in politics as in morals, that a Government ought to deal as *carefully* and *prudently* with the public money as a wise man will deal with his own personal property.

But, alas, who will say that this has always been the case ? The truth is, rulers have often been guilty of wanton profusion, and gross dishonesty, in handling the public money. Men who thus act are foul stains on Government, and their conduct, more than any thing else, makes authority cheap and despicable in the eyes of the people. And God forbid that I should say aught to screen the peculating courtier, or the minister prodigal of his country's wealth. The wickedness of apologizing for such men were, if possible, even greater than their crimes. When we think that a large portion of the taxes is drawn from the earnings of the hard toiling labourer, we cannot fail but look with horror at men, who, instead of laying out the money thus obtained for the public benefit, expend it on the gratification of their own lusts, and in the accomplishment of their own selfish ends. Such criminals stand among ordinary sinners, as Saul stood among the people. The crimes of such men partake at once of the most loathsome meanness, and the most appalling guilt. He that plunders his country, let him do it *in what way* soever he may, ought to be held up to reprobation, and, if possible, brought to condign punishment.

Yet, you must not suppose, that all that is said on the prodigality of rulers is true, or is said from a generous sympathy for those who bear the burdens. The public money may be expended to a vast amount, yet there may be no



waste. Nothing more may be laid out than the exigencies of the time may absolutely require. Hence the *opposition in power* have oftener than once been compelled to own, that retrenchment could be carried no further. This was candid. But, then, what are we to think of past professions, and past appeals? The truth is—and it ought not to be concealed, the people need to know it—that much of the outcry against profuse expenditure is often nothing more than a *low fetch* of ambitious and unprincipled men, by which they at once embarrass those in authority, and minister to the basest passions of the most ignorant portion of the people. The tax, or finance, argument is, indeed, the patent argument of the demagogue. Without it, it is extremely difficult to see how he could at all get on. This argument he can at all times employ without *any expense* of thought, and with the certainty of a considerable share of applause, such as it is. For who so generous, honest, and patriotic as the man who labours incessantly to save the people's money!

All that is necessary, indeed, to render such men the first of patriots, and entitle them in all justice to profound gratitude, and the highest applause, is merely *honesty* of motives, accompanied with *mature wisdom* in their plans, and a *rigorous consistency* betwixt their professions and their practice. Did they possess these qualities, it were almost impossible to admire or praise their labours too highly. But, alas, for poor human nature:—the history of not a few of these disinterested patriots is the bitterest satire which their bitterest enemy can utter. Their professions when struggling to gain public favour, and their conduct after they have got hold of the public purse, and the patronage of the Government.—What a contrast!

But, admit that all uttered on this matter by the political economist is uttered in perfect sincerity, and still it may be good for nothing: yea, may turn out ruinous folly. Suppose that his savings are made at the loss of national honour, or that they shall endanger the existence of the state, by weakening its means of defence—cramp internal improvement—derange, or, it may be, utterly destroy some great branch of commerce—his folly, not his wisdom, his waste, not his saving, would soon be made apparent in the most calamitous results. The truth is, that with men of wisdom the question is not how much is expended? but can it be spared—is it well laid out—will it contribute to increase the wealth, honour, and security of the people—will it enlarge their means for moral and intellectual improvement—will it tend, on principles of equity, to advance the political influence of the country?—These are obviously the questions that will engage the atten-



tion of every statesman of sagacity and true patriotism ; and by these questions will the wise financier be guided. But these are questions which the man of fractions has neither the will nor ability to investigate.

Let it not be supposed, however, that these remarks are intended to encourage a profuse, far less a reckless, expenditure of the public money, or to cast odium on an honest, wise, and temperate *opposition*. For such an *opposition* the genius of the Constitution makes ample provision ; while history furnishes abundant proofs that this is the best and most natural protection of liberty, as well as an admirable security against Executive extravagance. Yet, who can see the public mind abused by hollow professions, and the interests of a people sacrificed, under a fair show of generosity and patriotism, by fools who understand not one *sound principle* in politics ; or by hypocrites who only seek their *own ends*, and not be filled with indignation, to which it is difficult to give utterance in decent terms. He that robs the public mind of truth is surely not less wicked than the man who robs the public purse. What shall we think of him that would do both ?

No one entertains a higher respect for the good sense of the people than I do. But, this very respect, while it warrants plain speaking, forbids flattery. I must, then, tell you, there are two points in this matter on which the greater part of men must ever be very imperfect judges. *First*, the amount necessary for the support of Government. *Second*, the best methods of laying out a revenue. Any man, it is true, may, by a little reading and reflection, acquire some knowledge of the outlines of national finance ; but to understand this subject thoroughly demands means for obtaining information, as well as talents for making a proper use of that information, which few, indeed, possess. Now, let us suppose,—a thing that has often assumed more than the form of a supposition,—that whenever the people are taxed beyond what they think is necessary for the support of the Government, or when the revenue is not expended in perfect accordance with their preconceived notions of *utility* and *frugality*, although the whole may be done by their own representatives, they shall refuse to pay the taxes. Who can conceive the mischiefs, and general anarchy to which this conduct must give rise. Nor will the evil be much mitigated, should the popular branch of the Legislature withhold the Supplies whenever it feels checked by the one above it. I am not to be told that the Constitution has made provision for this, and, therefore, it may at any time be done. The Constitution allows the Sovereign to withhold the royal assent and thus prevent any bill from becoming a law. Yet in a hundred years this right has not been exercised by the *crown* ;

the power in both cases is similar. It is a sacred reserved power on which *either* party may fall back, and at a desperate crisis—never but then—employ it. There is hardly any thing that shows a man more clearly to be a fool, than when he is seen drawing the most remote exceptions, and the most delicate principles, into general rules and common practice. Such an order, or rather disorder, of things would overturn the whole social system in a day. Matters have come to a frightful pass, when the popular branch of the Legislature, can only cause its power to be felt by stopping the Supplies. Depend upon it, this can not be often done without dissolving the Government, and bringing matters to an issue in another place than a Legislative Hall, and with other weapons than those of argument and votes. Men should understand this.—Still the principle in the Constitution to which we refer is admirable as a reserve principle. But it must only be employed on *extraordinary* occasions. To use it otherwise is matchless folly and great wickedness.

In short, without taxes no Government can be supported, unless it possesses great hereditary revenues. In modern times, revenues of this sort are not possessed to any great extent in the more powerful and civilized nations. Nor is it desirable that this source of supply should be increased. Hereditary revenues, held by the Crown, and, in a great measure, under the influence of the Executive—and theories apart, this must ever, to a great extent, be the case—it is easy to see how an ambitious Prince, aided by a set of unprincipled ministers, might enslave a people, or at least prevent them from enlarging the foundations of liberty by safe and constitutional means. Had certain of the Princes of the House of Stuart not been under the necessity of calling the Parliament together to obtain the Supplies, the liberties of England might yet have been to achieve. Hence the tax, which the Government requires, and which the people, through their Representatives, grant, though when viewed abstractedly may be regarded as an evil; yet as a part of the system it becomes an efficient security against the usurpations of the Crown, and gives the people a right in the Government and a power over its measures which they otherwise could not possess. If men are to be free, they must submit to taxation—they must support their own Government. Nor unless it is well supported, can it ever be efficient for good. If you realize these truths as you ought, you will pay taxes, “not of constraint, but willingly.”

And is it not true, my friends, that the taxes paid hitherto in this country amounted to nothing more than a *mere pepper-corn tribute*. Had our taxes been less, we had absolutely forgotten that we had a Government to support. I know of no

country, that has any thing like a regular form of Government, in which the people are so lightly taxed as they have been in Upper Canada. Nor is it difficult to account for this. We enjoy the protection of the mightiest and most efficient Government on earth without contributing any thing to its support. Truth and common sense have often been outraged, but scarcely ever to the same extent, as by the outcry raised in this Province, about oppressive burdens. There is an insolent impudence about the whole thing, which makes one for a moment forget the monstrous falsehood, in the insult offered to his understanding. That persons could be found who would utter this cry of oppression to *answer an end*, is not surprising; but that thousands should have been found so credulously mad as assent to it, is really fitted quite as much to excite a smile of pity at their weakness, as the conduct of their deceivers is fitted to provoke the frown of indignation. He were a magician, indeed, who could as easily and completely persuade suffering men that they are happy, as certain persons have persuaded happy men that they were wretched. And wretched they have made them. Long did they amuse, or, if you will, torture, their victims with fancied ills: at last, they have plunged them into real calamities. And had it not been for the generosity of that Government which they had so shamefully maligned, these calamities would have proved disastrously ruinous. There are others, verily, besides Satan that perplex the mind with gloomy phantoms, that they may drive their victims to despair—to utter ruin. But I remark

### III. *That subjects ought to honour their rulers.*

Respect, or a well tempered and enlightened veneration, for those clothed with authority, whether they be Parents, Princes, or subordinate Magistrates, is a dictate of nature.—On this the word of God is full and explicit; while the Divine injunctions to honour superiors are enforced by numerous promises and threatenings. "Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." "Fear God and honour the King."—"Render fear to whom fear is due, and honour to whom honour is due." And, at the same time, men are warned against using language by which this respect for superiors may be weakened. Hence, says another inspired writer, "thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." These are but a few of many passages in which this duty is brought before us in the Scriptures. Nor will the frequency, and the force, with which it is urged on our attention appear surprising, if it be borne in mind, that unless the principles of subordination are thoroughly instilled into men, society can-

not be held together without a constant course of miracles. God never works miracles to set aside, or overthrow, the great principles of morals. Government rests on these.—On these it must stand, or go down. It is true that Government may exist after a sort, although some of its elements are wanting, or possessed but in a small degree; but subordination—and what this implies—lost, whether in the family or in the state, and all order and morals shall quickly perish. Now mark it, my friends—all subordination must turn either on *fear* or *respect* for those who are clothed with authority. Respect is the basis of subordination in the minds of enlightened freemen, living under a righteous Government. Plain it is, that all subjects ought to honour wise and virtuous rulers. If they do not, to me it is very clear, that their neglect, or, which is not uncommon, their ignorant insolence, which some mistake for independency of mind, will, in the end, lead to anarchy, that will quickly bring them under an iron despotism that will compel subjection without either caring for or seeking respect. Making it, for a moment, a matter of mere selfish calculation, I aver, that every man who does not wish to see the Government overthrown, and is not fully prepared for all the consequences of such a overthrow, must feel sacredly bound to honour the rulers of the country in which he lives.—Many who neglect this, and treat their rulers with scorn, are only vain men, or mere vulgar fools. They are not malignant haters. Yet this sort of folly, or vanity, is assuredly far more entitled to severe censure than pity. The man who refuses respect to rulers, fails quite as much in his duty, as he who refuses to pay tribute. For just the freer, and the more excellent any form of Government is, so is there just the more need that rulers be sincerely honoured. And let it be written down in your minds, that such a Government as ours cannot stand if the rulers are despised: and never deceive yourselves by thinking, that you can honour the Government in the abstract, while at the same time you treat with sullen contempt, or assail with open abuse, the persons intrusted with its administration. This sort of abstract respect is like abstract charity, each must have its object—its living object, or it is mere deception.

But if respect for rulers be so essential to the existence and efficiency of Government, what must we think of those who labour to root out of the human mind this sentiment, or class of sentiments. They are—profess what they may—the bitter, the deadly, enemies of all Government, and, by consequence, of human happiness. True, their aim is not exactly to destroy the sentiments of respect. They wish rather to

transfer its fruits to themselves, or others equally worthless. But are they so ignorant as not to know, that, even were they entitled to respect, the course they pursue will much sooner entirely destroy the principle, than transfer its fruits. Hence, the reason why those who thus abuse and madden the mind of the multitude may be borne to-day on their shoulders into power, and to-morrow trampled under their feet. Natural and just retribution this.

But do not suppose that I wish to encourage a blind devotion to those in authority, or would have you to present them with a gross and obsequious homage. This is the incense which slaves may offer to tyrants. But this, if offered to high-minded British rulers, would, I doubt not, be as loathsome to them, in our day, as it would be intolerable to their high minded subjects, if it were demanded. Than this nothing can be more at variance with the genius of our free institutions, and the manly character of the people. Our rulers are not to be regarded as the Grand Lamas of Thibet—sacred personages whom few shall see, and of whom none shall speak but in terms of adulation. Those, who exclaimed, “it is the voice of a god, and not of a man,” beheld their idol the next hour a lifeless corpse. And he that would flatter, or teach others to flatter rulers, in the present state of the world, is the most dangerous enemy to those in high places. But are men to be doomed perpetually to the mischiefs of extremes? When they cease to flatter, shall they abuse; and when they do not abuse, shall they flatter? Alas, so it is! And just because sycophants and traitors find their account by it. Enlightened friends of their country—men who revere those in authority from proper motives will do neither. They will cherish a sincere respect for those who, under God, rule over the destinies of men, “and are a terror to evil-doers and a protection to those who do well.” Hence the respect of such men is truly valuable. It springs from pure principles—it depends not for its existence on the smiles of the great, the splendours of a throne, or the trappings of office. It is as far removed from cringing as it is from insolence—it is the product of the higher and severer virtues. In a word, my brethren, let us honour our rulers for the place which, under God, they have been called to occupy. If they are wise men, let us admire them—if they are just men, let us revere them—if they are benevolent men, let us esteem them.

But, then, it will be asked, what shall be done in case rulers are weak, vacillating, or wicked. The man who acts from right motives, and cherishes for good rulers the most profound regard, will feel no difficulty here. If they are weak, he cannot admire them—if they are vacillating, he can-

not esteem them—if they are wicked and tyrannical, he must oppose them. Yet, even in his opposition, the respect due to authority will never, for a moment, be lost sight of. His obedience to the law will not be weakened in the slightest degree; although, for a time, it may be under the direction of persons whom he can neither esteem nor love. He will never confound the man and the magistrate; and while he strives, by all constitutional means, to reform the erring, or displace the guilty, statesman, he will never do so by trampling on his office, or by holding up to scorn the duties of his high station. Of worthless men in power he will speak with regret, and what is said will be said with the strictest regard to truth—with moderation and charity. He will make all possible allowance for the circumstances amidst which the faulty ruler has been placed—the peculiar difficulties that may be found in the situation—the temptations to which the individual has been exposed, as well as the explanations which the objectionable measures may admit of. And does he who acts thus manifest either a want of courage, wisdom, or love of order? We think not.

But the character of public men, it is said, is public property, and, therefore, ought to be carefully scrutinized. Granted. And, if it is candidly and temperately gone about, the scrutiny may be of real advantage to rulers as well as subjects. The man who is able and faithful fears no investigation. But surely the character of public men is not public property to be abused. One would suppose, that what is so valuable to a nation ought to be carefully preserved. That country is deplorably forgetful of its best interests that permits the character of its rulers to be destroyed by insidious villains, or torn to pieces by a furious mob. Yet what is more common. Hence it is that the character of rulers of the highest worth is constantly assailed by every weapon which ingenuity can devise, and the most reckless malice employ. Dark surmises—sly insinuations—insolent jests—and gross falsehoods are the weapons employed. And the wretches that employ them are frequently as cowardly, and not less wicked, than those savages that pierce the traveller with poisoned arrows from their thickets. It were bad enough if such attacks were made merely against the individual. But, almost universally, in the individual—the authority with which he is clothed—the law—the Government with which he stands connected, are all, if the assailant has wit, turned into contempt, and, if he has only dull malignity, trodden down with a coarse and vulgar joy. Now, whether this be done through the Press, or in conversation, it is alike to be condemned. It is wicked in design, and most hurtful in its effects.

Nor will it do to reply, that if what is said be slanderous, the ruler has ample means for vindicating—for indemnifying himself. The law is open. There is a deception in this. To see it clearly two things must be taken into account. (1) The liberty of speech and of the Press is completely secured by our precious Constitution. This liberty, one of its most invaluable and fundamental principles, is dear to the heart of every British subject; and is guarded by each with the most jealous care. God forbid it should ever be otherwise. Yet who can look at the way in which this liberty is abused, when turned into licentiousness, and not be greatly shocked? Yea, this capital principle in the Constitution is sometimes so viciously employed as to threaten its entire overthrow. Things not less strange have happened than that this liberty—licentiousness of the Press—should, in the end, lead to slavery. Because the Constitution has made the law of libel rigorously difficult and narrow for the prosecutor, and because men are patriotically delicate in giving a verdict for a slandered statesman, shall every low scribbler take advantage of these things, to spread abroad base surmises, and, by all possible means, blacken the character of rulers? Thus, alas, it is, that the most precious rights are abused. But (2) rulers, in many cases, cannot so easily prosecute the slanderer as some persons seem to think. Every contemptible defamer is not entitled to the distinction which such a prosecution gives. An infamous notoriety is valuable to such wretches. It secures bread as well as *fame* to them. Now they are not to be thus fed, or honoured. Prosecute them, and you give power to vice, and dignity to folly. Thus at least it is in many cases. Neglect is at once their punishment and their desert. Let the community thus treat them, and great good would follow. But further, a mind of true greatness, and conscious rectitude, is apt to treat slander, in many cases, with silent scorn, and *calmly leave its own worth* to find proofs, or, if need be, vindication, from time and events. Nor will it escape the notice of persons who reflect, that the dignity of office may forbid its possessor hastily to descend and meet some miserable calumniator, either through the Press, or in Court. Under these means of *protection*—for such they really are—the official and extempore slanderer pursues his vocation—disseminates the poison of calumny, until the public mind is, in the end, deeply and fatally affected by it. You are aware, that a falsehood may be so often repeated, and repeated under such a variety of forms, that it shall come at length to be credited by the simple-minded as if it were really a self-evident truth. In this way the credulity of men is scandalously abused by those who speak evil of dignities—who malign Government. The most



excellent institutions are thus shamefully misrepresented—the most elevated and worthy characters most vilely belied,—faults are imputed—excellencies concealed—doubts started—crimes hinted at. And whether all this be declared aloud, or merely whispered—declared in affected solemnity, or low jest—with many the thing takes—the calumny sticks in the mind, and entirely destroys the honour and respect due to rulers. Fatal effect—but not more fatal to the ruler than, in the end, it must prove to the subject.

Let me earnestly caution you, my brethren, to beware of men who labour to destroy in the minds of others all respect for those who are clothed with authority. Their end accomplished, and one main-stay of order and Government is removed—and men are just so far prepared for anarchy, and exposed to all its horrors. Pretend to what they may, they are low inhuman miscreants. We say they are in the worst sense low. For no man that uses the language which these persons employ, has any better claims to the manners of a gentleman, than he has to the wisdom of a philosopher, or the morals of a christian. It is painful to think to what an extent *writers* of this sort have succeeded in perverting the views, and soiling the minds, of honest and simple-hearted men. These men have been wrought upon, year after year, until many of them have come at length to regard their rulers, as little better than a set of monsters, whom it is a *virtue to despise*, and whom it would be a greater virtue to drive from the face of the earth. The person who can produce such an impression as this on the public mind, regarding wise and virtuous rulers, is no imperfect exemplification of the Spirit of Evil—is no mean representative of the Father of Lies.

And here I cannot but notice, what some of the best men in our times have marked with extreme pain:—I mean a general decay of respect for authority in all the relations of life. Persons of reflection will not consider this as a groundless complaint, or the evils which it involves as of trivial consequence.

Where the honour due is not altogether withheld, it is often rather reluctantly conceded, than frankly given. Indeed, a restlessness under restraint—a desire to get clear of all superior influence—an utter dislike to all subordination—are prominent and wish to see an end put to all distinctions—are prominent and alarming features of the present age. This state of things prevails, to a less or greater extent, in all the relationships of life, from the family circle to the community made up of millions. This bodes no good, my brethren. For whether we think of the cause that gives rise to this spirit, or of its effects, if we either love our fellow men, or fear God, we cannot



fail but think of the whole with much uneasiness. Do you tell me this is mere peevishness, or a wish to see arbitrary power established, and men and children curtailed of their natural rights, and just liberties? Well—well be it so. If I am to be thus judged, be it so—but hear me—listen—remember I tell you that this spirit, if not checked, will produce a licentiousness of *intellect* and of *heart* that will ere long spurn all just restraints—substitute will for law—fit men for every folly and every crime—and endanger the very existence of society. But lest any one should say that now, or formerly, when I have spoken plainly on this matter, I plead merely for the authorities in civil Government being honoured, I answer no—not merely do I plead that all civil authority may be respected, but that all in authority may be honoured. And can I not appeal to yourselves to say, if I have not often and earnestly urged this thing home to the conscience of your children. And is there a parent so mad as to trifle with the respect, with the sacred honour, which is his due. If he does, he perils the peace, virtue, and happiness of his family. Let subjects refuse all honour and respect to rulers—treat them with all the contumely they can muster, and dare manifest—and what is often witnessed in a family will be seen on a wider scale, and with the most dreadful results in a state. And never, O never forget that in the family circle only, can the principles of submission and respect for authority be produced, matured, and first exemplified. Family authority universally neglected, and the honour and reverence due to parents universally withheld, and shall magistrates be revered and obeyed? Vain thought. In any country where such domestic dissoluteness prevails, the throne of the Prince and the Judge's bench will soon become things “for the slow moving finger of scorn to point at.” But

IV. *It is the duty of subjects, in all cases, to aid their rulers ; and, if assailed by violence, to defend them.*

This may be looked at under two aspects. *First*, it is the duty of all subjects to aid their rulers in carrying the laws into effect. It really matters nothing, how excellent soever the laws may be, unless the people generally are ready to lend their assistance in detecting offenders, and in bringing the guilty to punishment. Without such aid from the people, the magistrate will be impotent, and the law become a dead letter. And this truth and its consequences are just the more apparent the freer the civil institutions of a country are. Where disregard to the laws begins, all safety ends. Nor can there be a more dangerous state of things, than when criminals can count on impunity, from the protection thrown around them

by the morbid sympathy of a community ignorant or regardless of the high claims of justice. Every man—the meanest not less than the greatest—should feel that he has a deep interest in the laws being fully supported, and the claims of justice being ever held inviolate. Hence, it is his duty to give all the assistance he can to the ministers of justice—the servants of Government.

But, *second*, subjects *must defend rulers if they are assailed by violence*. Under ordinary circumstances, the regular force of the state is quite sufficient for the protection of authority. There may, however, be emergencies—you are at no loss to conceive of such—when this force may either not be at hand, or may not be sufficient. The path of duty is then plain,—if the Government be unprotected, and assailed by violence, every man who does not wish it overthrown will rush, if he possibly can, to its defence. And when he has done so, and exposed himself to danger, he has done nothing more than what was barely his duty.

But the discharge of this piece of duty rests, of course, on the supposition that defensive war is lawful. This, you are aware, has, of late, in this Province, been frequently called in question. This opinion is not novel, although it has acquired, in our times, rather a novel form; and is found to embrace principles neither wise nor safe, and, in some cases, far from being honourable to those who hold it. I beg that it may be distinctly understood, that it is my sincere conviction that war on any other grounds whatsoever than *those purely defensive* is the most heinous wickedness. And were it possible to collect all the curses which the prophets of God ever pronounced against sinners, and pour them forth in one deep denouncement, that denouncement ought to fall on the guilty heads of those men who have been the means of originating and carrying on unlawful wars. Aggression in this matter is a sort of wickedness that has hardly any parallel. But does the criminality of this hellish conduct render defensive war unlawful? We think the very reverse. It is just because men will make aggressive wars that defensive war becomes absolutely necessary, and, on the plainest and most sacred principles of justice, clearly lawful. I shall not take up your time by any lengthened argument in support of this. The people whom I address do not need argument on so plain a matter; and they have, I trust, too much honesty and loyalty to pretend perplexity of judgment, where there is merely perversity of will. Those who deny the lawfulness of defensive war for the sake of consistency, ought to go a step further, and deny the use of all civil Government. For in such a world as ours—and we must just take men as they are, not as we could wish them to

be--a Government without force will very quickly be resolved into a number of persons who bear titles--wear certain symbols--play their respective parts in a national pageant--complacently hear, and impotently announce *opinions*. If contending parties choose to listen, good; if not, the matter, as far as the Government is concerned, is at an end. But if force is used by those in authority, in order to carry out their decision, and if violence must be employed in giving effect to law--in defending the innocent--or in bringing the guilty to punishment--whether this shall be the work of five men, or of fifty thousand--the principle is the same.

In a word, a Government without force among depraved creatures, *is will*, in place of *law*. To this it must come; and this, as it appears to me, is just no Government at all. Excellent state of things this for the cunning sharper, and the ruffian greedy for rapine: what it might be to the virtuous, peaceable, and simple-minded citizen, is quite another matter. But the whole thing is as far wrong in an international point of view, as it is in a municipal. Assuredly, my brethren, the time will come "when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Universal submission to the Prince of Peace will bring all this to pass. But ere this consummation takes place--a consummation for which all christians are bound to pray and to labour--it will be too soon "to beat our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into pruning-hooks." It would be well if persons who speculate on this matter would look a little more carefully into the cause--the true cause of universal peace. The complete triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom alone can bring about this. But to expect universal peace in a world "that lieth in wickedness" is what neither reason nor prophecy warrants. And to suppose a Government to exist without power to enforce all its just claims, in the various relations in which it stands to its own subjects, and to foreign states, is the height of folly. A folly, it is true, quite congruous with the other notions bred in the minds of crazy enthusiasts. But what shall be thought of those who are now clamouring against defensive war, but who neither ask, nor are entitled to, the same apology which, in all fairness, ought to be made for the enthusiast? Who can forbear to smile, when he sees this affected humanity employed to hide principles as different from justice and mercy, as they are from loyalty? Defensive war murder! Pity it is that John the Baptist did not understand this matter better, so that, instead of telling soldiers "to be content with their wages," he ought to have told them, in plain terms, that they were murderers. We wonder much what these persons would have said to St. Paul, when he accepted a guard of Roman

soldiers, to protect him from the daggers of assassins, on his way from Jerusalem to Cesarea? On more occasions than one did this Apostle find, that human law would have been to him a poor protection, had the magistrate borne no sword, or borne it in vain. It is not a little surprising, sometimes, to see extremes meet. The upholder of despotic authority cries out, there must on no account whatever be any defensive war. Lie down and die. The man who is secretly preparing arms to overthrow the Government, exclaims how horrible to think of men kept on pay to destroy their fellow-creatures—all war is murder. All war, we presume, but his own.

There is something wrong—the intellect or the conscience is diseased, or it is mere hypocrisy in a man to declaim against defensive war. To execrate as murderers all who have drawn the sword in defence of law and human rights, is to execrate some of the noblest for moral worth whose names adorn the page of sacred or profane history. While to condemn the principle in unqualified terms, is to shield the guilty—to hold out an inducement for the commission of the most horrid crimes—is to be wiser and more benevolent than Almighty God—is to play the fool or the knave in a manner truly deplorable.—What! are we to see a horde of men—men in nothing but the form—plundering, burning, and murdering around us, and shall we meet them only with opinions and appeals? Is violence, when suffering helpless innocency is flying before its gory weapons, to be met with nothing but cool reasoning—Contemptible madness, cruel mercy were this. And when you see the Government and the Constitution under which you live, and in which you find so large a share of all your earthly happiness treasured up, openly assailed by wicked men, are you to stand coolly by and witness *all, all* torn to pieces, and scattered to the winds, and a whole country filled with confusion, lamentation, and woe? This you have not done. This, I venture to affirm, you will not do. All boasting apart, as morally indecorous, I fearlessly aver, that ere that glorious symbol of liberty that waves on a thousand towers, from the banks of the Ganges to those of the St. Lawrence, is torn to the dust in our Western Capital, by the hands of home-bred traitors, or foreign sympathizers, there are many hearts in Upper Canada that will warm to desperate defiance: and if that day of deep desecration and woe comes, that shall see our Constitution and British connection perish, there are many hearts now warm that will be cold ere that day's sun shall go down.

I shall now close this discourse with two general reflections.

*First, I beseech you to think seriously of the civil blessings*

*which you enjoy, and beware of the men who would deprive you of them.*

You may not be profound politicians, and the greater part of you are incapable of estimating, upon rigorous principles, the relative merits of different Governments. With any discussion of this sort I shall not trouble you. There are, however, a few questions to which I must beg your attention. Is not that Government good which protects every man in the full possession of his rights—under which he may employ his powers and resources to the best advantage, and under which the fruits of his industry are secured to him—and which will not allow him to suffer the slightest detriment in person or property, either from the great clothed with power, or from the mob bent on violence? And can that Government be charged with oppression under which every industrious and prudent person has the means of prosperity, and really is prosperous? And were it not as absurd, as wicked, to talk of tyranny, while the poorest inhabitant has the most perfect protection of laws made by men of the people's choice, and administered by Judges of the highest talents and integrity? Now, my hearers, say are not these things true,—substantially true, of the Government under which you live? In it there may be corruption, from vice or weakness; just as there is, to a less or greater extent, in every Government under heaven. But oppression, where is it?—Tyranny, who has felt it?—Law prostituted, who has seen it?—The industrious and virtuous wretched, where are they? Assuredly there is much misery here, as there is in every country in which sloth, imprudence, intemperance, and discontent prevail. But are these vices, and their dreadful consequences, to be charged against the Government? What folly; and yet it is a folly into which thousands of self-ruined persons fall. They accuse the Government of corruption, while the evil is in their own hearts. Hitherto we have been, as you well know, a prosperous community. A winter of sad calamity may set in on us; and if so, wise men will know where to look for the cause. Cursed sedition—infernal rebellion! This is the cause, if our prosperity is to perish. And I must be permitted to say, that I do not know any part of the world in which honest industry has reaped more substantial fruits than it has reaped in this country. And yet, forsooth, the world must be told, that we are a people peeled and oppressed, and, in every sense, wretched; and, in order to improve us, we must be revolutionized, and every thing thrown into hopeless confusion.

But, then, it will be asked, are there no evils that need to be reformed—no corruptions that ought to be rooted out? I have, by implication, admitted both. And were this stated

more explicitly I am sure, no sincere friend to the country could either be offended, or wish to deny it. Every civil institution is liable to corruption; and one or other of its parts will, in course of time, require modification and repair. Consequently, there is room for legitimate reform. And in bringing about this, every honest man will use what influence he may possess. Before, however, he commences in this work let him weigh carefully the following principles:--(1) Let him be sure the thing is an evil, not a political misconception---not the fretting of a discontented mind---not a difficulty which has sprung from his own personal vices, or follies. (2) Let him be sure that it is a real abuse, not the watchword of a party. (3) Let him see that what is complained of, be not an essential part of the Constitution which may create occasional inconvenience, but the removal of which would produce infinite disorder. (4) Let him ponder well whether the thing really felt to be an evil has originated with the Government, and whether the Government has influence over it? And (5) let it be clearly ascertained, that the thing is in itself, and in its consequences, really mischievous. These opinions must be carefully kept in mind by all who wish to reform. How entirely these principles have been disregarded is but too well known. Nor did those persons to whom I refer merely overlook sound principles, but, for years past, in the eradication of evils, they have proceeded as an intoxicated Surgeon would do, who should commence in a dark room to cut out a cancer, relying solely on his strength of arm, his decision, and the sharpness of his instruments. The figure is only complete when it is borne in mind, that our State operators have *thus cut* more frequently at the sound, than into the diseased parts.

Beware then *what persons* you follow as leaders in reform.

He that is fully entitled to this character, in its high and proper sense, must be no ordinary man. One capable of detecting defects and abuses, and safely applying the proper remedies, must be possessed of a strong, I had almost said of a capacious, intellect. Cunning, prying, bustling men---men of mere management---active, and really useful among details, are often altogether unfit for dealing with a great plan or system of things. But this the leader in reform must be able to do with very great precision. If he requires a microscopic eye to detect minor abuses, he must also possess a telescopic vision to perceive the more distant objects and relations of things. He must thoroughly understand Government as a science. While the history of his country---all its main relations---the grand sources of its power, both moral and political, as well as the dangers to which it is peculiarly exposed, must

be distinctly understood by him, and the whole understood in system. A weak minded man is incapable of this. He will often mistake excellencies for faults---a partial derangement for a radical defect,---the effect for the cause. While in the application of remedies he will employ means which, instead of improving what is faulty, may lead to ruin. A child entrusted with the command of a shattered vessel on a tempestuous ocean is not less fit for the task, than is the imbecile politician, who heads a party and sets about reforming abuses *in a troubled state*.--- And do not suppose that impudence will ever be a substitute for moral firmness, or presumption an equivalent for high talent. But,

Further, *a leader in reform must be a good man*. No bad man ever was, or ever will be, an efficient corrector of moral evils. Such a man wants the steadiness of purpose, the ardent philanthropy, the sincere love of truth, the admiration of moral beauty---and, above all, he wants the fear and love of God, without which no man was ever well qualified for dealing with human institutions that required either nice modifications, or severe correction. When God intends to reform and to spare a people, he raises up among them wise and good men. But when the same Omnipotent Being is about to destroy a people for their sins, he permits *evil spirits* to arise among them.--- And they are destroyed. Woe, woe to that land! the leading reformers of which are men without talents, or men of great talents and no principle---men who live by the mob---wield the minds of the rabble, by feeding their insolence and vanity with falsehood and adulation. God's vials of wrath are near to being poured out upon that country that is cursed with such influential Demagogues.

In a word, my brethren, stick to your British connection, cleave with heart and soul to the Constitution. While we have the Constitution and British justice to look to, I will hope for every thing that is good. But the former lost, and the Palladium is gone---and if we are abandoned by Great Britain, or crushed by her just indignation, what is to become of us? Then, indeed, shall liberty perish---then, indeed, shall their be oppression, tyranny, and wretchedness to fulfil the predictions, and glut the revenge, of our bitterest enemies. Think, then, O think seriously of the civil blessings you enjoy, and let no man cajole you out of these, or violently rob you of them. But

Second, *let me urge you to cherish a sincere respect for our Constitution, and also for the country with which we stand connected*.

It were easy, as it were vain, to frame ideal systems, that might appear even more perfect than the British Con-



stitution. But for all practical purposes, this appears to me incomparably the best system of civil polity for the people who live under it. But, then the complaint is, that we have not had the Constitution in its fulness. To this I reply, that we have all which, under present circumstances, can be expected---that we have more of it than many desire, and, may I just add, more than some persons deserve.

Were it asked wherein consists the excellence of our Constitution? I should answer briefly, that it consists in the obvious truths---that, *first*, a large portion of its elements are drawn, either directly or indirectly, from revealed religion. That, *secondly*, its fundamental principles are in perfect accordance with the soundest views of human nature. *Thirdly*, the improvement which it has received from a long tract of ages.---*Fourthly*, the admirable division of power, by which at once the most perfect liberty is secured, and the most complete responsibility. It is, indeed, take it as a whole, the image of the soul of a great and wise people---a people jealous of their liberty---a people watchful against the encroachments of the Supreme power; yet no less careful that the democratic influence should be kept within proper bounds. And should nothing remain of the Empire, in some distant age, but its Constitution, that would be monument enough---that would stand an intellectual pyramid, to tell the world that a free and a wise people once flourished in Britain.

We are best able to judge of human institutions from their effects. Whatever institutions contribute directly to the virtue, prosperity, and true greatness of a people must be good. Let us look for a moment at the British Constitution under this light. Not to speak of the military achievements of our country, or to affirm that her armies have at all times fought on the side of right; yet surely truth warrants, what patriotism prompts us to declare, that more than once has Britain stood on the Marathon of the world, and fought for the liberties of the human race. Nor ought it to be overlooked, that when she has made conquests, these have, in all cases, been accessions to the domains of intelligence, liberty, and virtue. Even in India, where, perhaps, more has happened, than in any other part, to humble and grieve us, the people have long since found, that, although individuals may, for a time, misdirect, and abuse British power, its natural tendency, when it comes forth in the national mind, is not to destroy, but to bless those under it. *There* a hundred dynasties had arisen and fallen, and each had scourged the helpless tribes of Hindostan with reckless oppression. It was reserved for Great Britain---noble distinction---to give repose and protection to the afflicted nations of India. And for the first time



for three thousand years *have they found*. that rulers may be just, and conquerors may be merciful. The moral power of Britain at once retains and benefits the whole of Southern Asia. Sublime spectacle; but its full sublimity shall only be seen when Christian Missionaries, through God's help, have broken the chains of superstition that bind the mind of India.

And who can think of what Britain has done, and is still doing, on the shores of Africa for the helpless and much-abused tribes of that continent, and not be filled with admiration? Did she there once, like other nations, sin grievously? Admit it: -- and then say, hath not the reparation been noble, and befitting the case? If atonement can be made, she hath made it. On the shores of Africa she now stands like a guardian angel--one hand, uplifted in pity, she points to the blood-stained coast, and the other she points to the ocean; and the approaching *slaver* sees in it the sword of vengeance. Demon-like man, little cares he what flag appears, till the Flag of England is seen in the distance. Then does he tremble--then does his guilty courage fail him, for well does he know that under that flag there are tears of pity for the oppressed, and bolts of just wrath for the oppressor. In this protection of Britain there is surely much of moral grandeur. But more impressive still--more truly grand--was that act by which she made a million of slaves free men in one day--aye, and paid their price, too, from the taxes toiled for by her noble and generous people. What in Grecian story--what in Roman triumphs--can be put in comparison with this?

My brethren, I have aimed at no eulogy on our country. This is as little needed, as I am little able to do justice to it. All the world knows Britain. And where she is not loved, she is feared and envied:--envy often the truest eulogy. But I have thrown out these hints simply for two reasons. *First*, that you may love and revere that country, which has grown to such a pitch of power, and has secured so large a share of prosperity and pure fame under her fostering and protecting Constitution. Now, God forbid that we should forget that this has only been a means. The Lord Omnipotent hath raised her up, and made her a blessing to the world. Nor ought we to forget the moral and religious worth of the people which hath given being, in a sense, to their Constitution, and which hath prepared them for deriving from it all its natural and rich fruits. A people without religion must not think they can possess true liberty. Still, it were improper to overlook the fact, that the Constitution has contributed not a little to expand and direct the energies of the national mind.

*Next*, that you may be upon your guard against those new and untried theories, which are now so often put forth,

and never put forth, I am sorry to say it, without some portion of censure levelled at Great Britain and her institutions, and this, too, by men of British birth ! Is it not inexpressibly disgusting to see such men labouring to hide the excellencies, searching for the faults, and rejoicing in the anticipated ruin of their country. These be the veriest wretches---the helots of humanity---the most choice miscreants of our race. What ! rejoice---and glory over the fall---the expected fall---of their country, and such a country. These men do not so much hate their native land as they hate their race. Let the light that now blazes from Britain be quenched, and all nations would feel that a great light had been put out, which the world could ill want. Let the power of Britain be destroyed, and the fulcrum on which the liberty of the world turns would be broken. He that wished that Rome had only one neck was hardly a wretch more hateful, than is that man who calls himself a British subject, and yet would rejoice to see his country covered with confusion, and all her glory pass away. Of such men I will say---“O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united !”---And of our country I will say, “If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.”

THE END.